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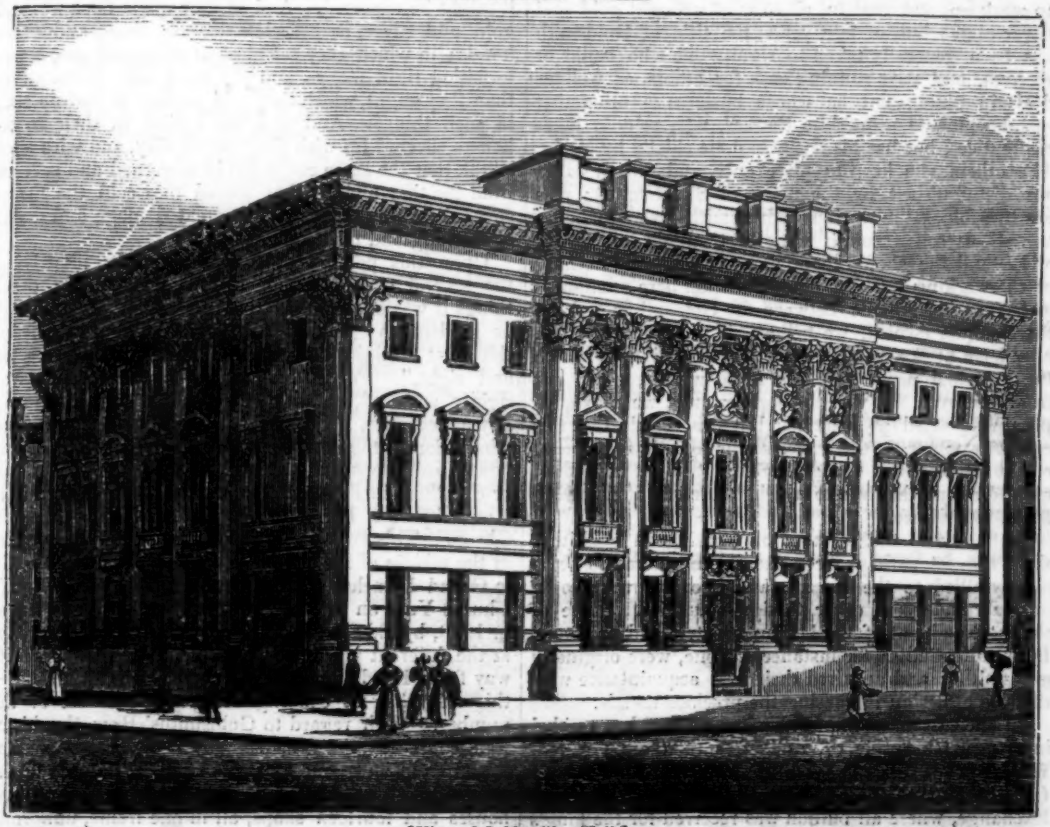
GOLDSMITHS' HALL.



[View of Goldsmiths' Hall.]

THE Goldsmiths' Company is one of the most ancient of the London Guilds, or associated crafts. It appears, indeed, to have originated before the time when charters of incorporations began to be granted to such societies by our kings. In the year 1180, in the reign of Henry II., it is recorded to have been one of those that were fined as *adulterine* companies, that is, companies that had no royal charter or licence; and it may have existed in this state for a considerable period. It would seem already to have been a wealthy and important association, if we may judge by the amount of the fine imposed upon it, which was forty-five marks, while from most of the others only one mark was exacted. Of the present London companies, that of the Goldsmiths' ranks fifth in the order of precedence, the first four being those of the Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, and Fishmongers. None of these, however, have royal charters so ancient as the earliest by which the Goldsmiths' Company was incorporated. This was granted by Edward III. in 1327; and subsequent charters, confirming and extending the privileges then conferred, were obtained in 1394 from Richard II., and in 1462 from Edward IV.

Even before they were thus regularly incorporated, however, the Goldsmiths had apparently taken their place as one of the leading trades of the city. We have a curious evidence of this in an incident which the old chronicler Fabyan relates as having happened in the year 1269, in the reign of Henry III. We shall give the statement in the modernized version of Maitland, the historian of London:—"About the same time a great difference happened between the Company of Goldsmiths and that of the Merchant Tailors'; and other companies interesting themselves on each side, the animosity increased to such a degree that, on a certain night, both parties met (it seems by consent) to the number of 500 men, completely armed; when, fiercely engaging, several were killed, and many wounded, on both sides; and they continued fighting in an obstinate and desperate manner, till the sheriffs raised a great body of citizens, suppressed the riot, and apprehended many of the combatants, who were soon after tried by the mayor, and Laurence de Brooke, one of the king's justices; and thirteen of the ringleaders being found guilty, they were condemned and hanged."

Here we find, while the Merchant Tailors lead the one faction, the Goldsmiths are at the head of the other. The early opulence and consequence of the latter were in great part acquired by their practice of acting as bankers, which they did in this and other countries long before any regular banks were established. They served both to individuals and to the government as agents in the transference of bullion and coin, in making payments and obtaining loans, and in

the safe preservation and custody of treasure. From a notice which Malcolm has preserved in his 'Londinium Redivivum,' vol. ii., p. 414, it would appear that the practice of banking had been continued by the goldsmiths in London down to a very recent period. The passage is extracted from 'A General Description of All Trades,' published in 1747, and contains the following statement: "Goldsmiths, the fifth company, are, strictly speaking, all those who make it their business to work up, and deal in, all sorts of wrought gold and silver plate; but, of late years, the title of Goldsmith has been generally taken to signify one who banks or receives, and pays running cash for others, as well as deals in plate; but he whose business is altogether cash-keeping is properly a Banker, who seldom takes apprentices, but has his business done chiefly by clerks. The others who keep to plate only, and do not bank, are distinguished by the name of Silversmiths; who are two-fold,—the working silversmiths, who make up as well as sell (though some of them do not sell at all),—and the shopkeepers, many of whom do nothing at the working part." The distinction here mentioned as having been made between the Goldsmiths and the Silversmiths (which, we believe, is now obsolete) can only have been a popular mode of expression, by which the principal persons in the trade were marked out from the rest. It was the former only, we may suppose, who acted as bankers; but it is certain that this custom was not, as the writer seems to intimate, one of recent introduction, though perhaps it might have been revived about the time to which he refers after having fallen into disuse.

In England the mystery of working in gold and silver has not, perhaps, been usually considered to be so closely allied to the fine arts as it is or was wont to be in Italy and some other foreign countries. Some of the most eminent of the Italian painters and sculptors, Benvenuto Cellini, for instance, for one, were originally goldsmiths; and acquired their first acquaintance with the arts of design in chasing the precious metals.

In ancient times the goldsmiths of London resided in or near Cheapside, or, as it was then often called, West Cheap, to distinguish it from the other Cheap (that is, Market) Street, more to the east. The Royal Exchange, where all bullion was received for the king's coinagers, was in a street in this vicinity, which still bears the name of the Old Exchange. It runs down towards the river from the west end of Cheapside; "but the very housing and office of the exchange and coinage," says Maitland, "were about the midst thereof, south from the east gate that entereth St. Paul's churchyard, and on the west side."

It appears to have been thought, indeed, that no other persons except goldsmiths had a right to reside, or at least to open shops, in this vicinity. Maitland quotes a representation addressed by the company to Edward III., in the first year of his reign (1327), in which we find this stated along with several other curious particulars respecting those times. It would scarcely, perhaps, have been suspected by many of our readers, that the substitution of pastes for precious stones, and of plated wares for genuine metal, with other similar tricks, had been carried to such perfection by the artists of the early part of the fourteenth century, as they would seem to have been by the following extract from this representation:—"That no private merchant nor stranger heretofore were wont to bring into this land any money coined, but plate of silver to exchange for our coin. And that it had been also ordained that all who were of the goldsmiths' trade were to sit in their shops in the High Street of Cheap; and that no silver in plate, nor vessel of gold or silver, ought to be sold in the city of London, except at or in the Exchange, or in Cheapside among the goldsmiths, and that publicly; to the end that the people of the said trade might inform themselves whether the seller came lawfully by such vessel or not. But that now—many of the said trade of goldsmiths kept shops in obscure turnings, and by-lanes and streets, and did buy vessels of gold and silver secretly, without enquiring whether such vessel were stolen or lawfully come by; and, immediately melting it down, did make it into plate, and sell it to merchants trading beyond sea, that it might be exported. And so they made false work of gold and silver, as bracelets, lockets, rings, and other jewels; in which they set glass of divers colours, counterfeiting right stones, and put more alloy in the silver than they ought, which they sold to such as had no skill in such things. And that the cutlers in their workhouses covered tin with silver so subtilly, and with such slight, that the same could not be discerned and severed from the tin; and by that means they sold the tin so covered for fine silver, to the great damage and deceit of the king and his people."

Upon this petition order was taken for remedying the several evils complained of; and among other things it was commanded that none that pretended to be goldsmiths "should keep any shops but in Cheapside, that it might be seen that their works were good and right." For a long time this regulation was rigidly enforced, so that Cheapside presented a very gay appearance. Maitland eulogizes in a strain of fond admiration, "the most beautiful frame and front of fair houses and shops that were within the walls of London or elsewhere in England, commonly called Goldsmiths' Row, betwixt Bread Street end and the Cross in Cheap." This cross stood at the west end of Cheapside, in the middle of the open space, from which St. Martin le Grand branches out on the one hand and St. Paul's Church Yard on the other. It was one of those erected in 1290, by Edward I., in memory of Queen Eleanor, at the different places where her coffin had rested on its way from Herdeley in Lincolnshire, to Westminster—this and that at Charing being the two last of the number. With regard to Goldsmiths' Row the historian continues:—"The same was built by Thomas Wood, goldsmith, one of the sheriffs of London in the year 1491. It contained in number ten dwelling-houses and fourteen shops, all in one frame, uniformly built, four stories high, beautified towards the street with the Goldsmiths' Arms, and the likeness of woodmen, in memory of his name, riding on monstrous beasts, all which were cast in lead, richly painted over and gilt. The said front was again new painted and gilt over in the year 1594, Sir Richard Martin being then mayor, and keeping his mayoralty in one of them." In course of time, however, a few other tradesmen ventured to invade the privileged district. Under the year 1629, Maitland writes:—"At this time the city greatly abounded in riches and splendour, such as former ages were unacquainted with: then it was beautiful to behold the glorious appearance of goldsmiths' shops in the South Row of Cheapside, which in a continued course reached from the Old Change to Bucklersbury, exclusive of four shops only of other trades in all that space; which occasioned the privy council, on the 18th of November, to make the following order:—"Forasmuch as his majesty hath received information of the unseemliness and deformity appearing in Cheapside, by reason that divers men of mean trades have shops amongst the goldsmiths; which disorder it is his majesty's express pleasure to have reformed;—it was therefore thought fit, and accordingly ordered, that the two Lord Chief Justices, with such other judges as they shall think meet to call unto them, shall consider what statutes or laws there are to enforce the goldsmiths to plant themselves for the use of their trade in Cheapside and Lombard Street, and the parts adjacent, and thereupon

return certificate to the board in writing with all convenient expedition."

It may be suspected that the government, in manifesting all this solicitude to keep the goldsmiths collected in one particular part of the city, had some object beyond what was avowed. Those wealthy citizens, with whom, in addition to their own valuable stocks, was deposited so large an amount of property belonging to other persons, were probably looked upon as the readiest and most natural resource from whence to obtain a supply of money in case of any emergency that might arise; and their services, whether in the case of a loan or an exaction, would obviously be made the more available by keeping them together and preventing any of them from concealing themselves in obscure parts of the city. Accordingly, we find that when ship-money was imposed in 1635, one of the first steps taken by the government was to renew the prohibition against the dispersion of the goldsmiths. It ought not to be forgotten that a considerable time before Hampden made his memorable stand against this impost, a citizen of London, a merchant of the name of William Chambers, allowed himself to be thrown into prison rather than pay it, and would have tried the question of its legality in a court of law in an action against the lord mayor, by whom he had been committed, if the judges had not refused to allow his counsel to touch upon that point. Nowhere, indeed, did the tax experience more resistance than in London. The most peremptory orders were in consequence sent to the magistrates by the Privy Council to take the necessary measures for the collection of the assessment with all expedition. In some of these edicts it was especially commanded that the goldsmiths should be looked after. One dated the 24th of May, 1637, proceeded as follows:—"Whereas by our letters of the 15th of July and last of January, 1635, we did not only take notice of the present remissness and backwardness of the then lord mayor and aldermen, in seeing our directions, by his Majesty's express command, forthwith put into execution, by bringing the goldsmiths, living dispersed in the city, to seat themselves either in Cheapside or Lombard Street; for which purpose we required that all other tradesmen should be removed, and give place unto them; but if they should obstinately refuse and remain refractory, then to take security of them to perform the same by a certain day, or, in default of giving such security, to commit them to prison until they conform themselves; notwithstanding all which, his Majesty has been informed that there are yet a great number of houses of other several trades that live both in Cheapside and Lombard Street. We must let your lordship know that, if speedy and effectual care be not taken by you in seeing the same duly performed, his Majesty will not pass it by without calling you to an account for it." All shops not belonging to goldsmiths that had been opened since the said letters in Cheapside or Lombard Street are then ordered to be presently shut up, and not permitted to be opened till further order from the Board. Another order, however, from the Star Chamber, dated the 7th of July, mentions that "divers tradesmen, which are not goldsmiths, do contemptuously open again their shops both in Cheapside and Lombard Street, though they kept them for a while shut;" in consequence of which it is declared that, if every such shop shall not forthwith be shut up in each ward, the alderman or his deputy shall be committed to prison by warrant from the Board. But even this threat did not produce the desired effect. In another letter from the Privy Council to the next lord mayor, dated the 12th of January, 1638, complaint is made that there are still in the two streets "at the least four and twenty houses that are not inhabited by goldsmiths; but in some of them are one Grove, and one widow Hill, stationers; one Dover, a milliner; and one Brown, a bandseller; one Sanders, a drugster; and one Medcalfe, a cook; and one Edwards, a girdler, who do, by connivance, still inhabit there, having some part of their shops shut, and the rest open." The council, thereupon, in somewhat more civil language than had been before employed, pray and require the mayor to acquaint the aldermen with these facts; adding, "if they do not presently put our former directions in that particular in execution, we shall then give such further order as shall teach them to know that the commands of this Board ought not to be slighted." The troubles, however, which soon after followed, occasioning the overthrow and abolition of the Star Chamber, the privy council, and the throne itself, put an end for ever to these arbitrary and oppressive interferences; and since then Cheapside and Lombard Street have been as open as any other part of London to tradesmen of all descriptions, and the goldsmiths, deserting for the most part their ancient houses, have dispersed themselves over the town, and opened their shops wherever they pleased.

The Goldsmiths' Company, as is well known, have the privilege of assaying all gold and silver plate before it can be exposed for sale. This office they were appointed to exercise by the letters patent of Edward III., already quoted; but not for the first time, for it is there commanded that all work, ascertained to be of the proper fineness, shall have upon it "a stamp of a puncheon with a leopard's head, as of ancient time it hath been ordained."

Another duty which the Goldsmiths' Company are called upon to perform is, to assist at what is called "the trial of the pix,"—that is, the examination of the coinage, with the view of ascertaining whether it is of the sterling weight and purity. The pix (from the Latin pyxis) is the box in which the coins to be weighed and analyzed are contained. A very full account of the ceremonies observed on this occasion may be found in Mr. Brayley's 'Londiniana,' vol. iv., p. 142—148. The jury of Goldsmiths summoned usually consists of twenty-five, and they meet in a vaulted chamber on the east side of the cloisters at Westminster, called the Chapel of the Pix.

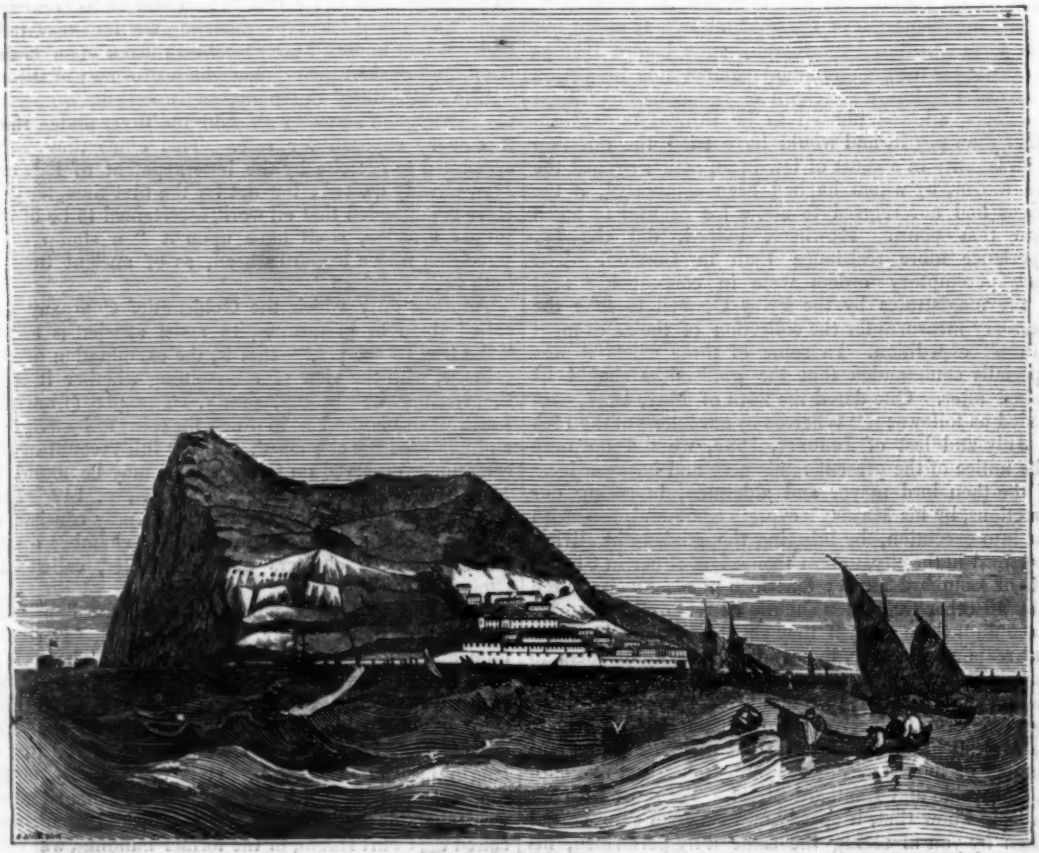
Our engraving presents a view of the handsome new Hall of this company, recently erected. It stands immediately behind the New Post-Office. The style is what is called the Italian; and the front of the building, which looks to the west, is adorned with six Corinthian columns, over which is a rich entablature of the same order. It is built of Portland stone, and is 159 feet in length by 100 in breadth. It is considerably larger than the old hall, which stood upon the same site, and was taken down in 1829. The principal apartment, called the Court Room, in the former building, was celebrated for the richness of its ornaments of various kinds, and especially for a sculptured marble chimney-piece of great magnificence, with a massive bronze grate, which latter article alone is said to have cost, many years ago, above a hundred pounds. There were also some good pictures; among others, an excellent one of Sir Hugh Middleton, the patriotic projector of the New River. The old hall was built a short time after the Great Fire.

GIBRALTAR.

The remarkable circumstance of such a position, one of the keys to a great kingdom, being held in permanent possession by a foreign nation, would alone confer no little interest upon Gibraltar. If we, in England, saw a fortress tenanted by Frenchmen or Spaniards frowning over the surrounding land and sea from the Bill of Portland, we should think it bad enough. Yet this would be nothing to the case of the English occu-

pation of Gibraltar. That promontory, besides its admirable advantages as a place of strength, may be said, owing to the narrowness of the strait upon which it juts out, to command, not merely the corner of Andalusia immediately under it, but the whole of the western coast of Spain, comprising nearly two-thirds of the whole maritime circumference of that country. It effectually cuts off all communication by sea between that part of Spain which is bounded by the Mediterranean and those parts which are bounded by the Atlantic. It disables that power as much as England would be disabled by another nation having the ability to hinder a ship passing from Liverpool, or Belfast, or Dublin, or Cork, or Plymouth, to Leith, or Hull, or London.

It appears, however, to have been late before the importance of this rock was discovered. The ancients had a fable that Europe and Africa were originally joined at this point, and that the two continents were riven asunder by Hercules, and a passage thereby opened between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Gibraltar, under the name of Calpe, and Mount Abyla opposite to it on the African coast, were called the Pillars of Hercules, and appear to have been in very early ages regarded by the people dwelling to the east of them, including the Carthaginians, the Greeks, and the Romans, as the western boundary of the world. It was probably long before navigation penetrated beyond this limit. Even in after-times, however, when Spain became well known to the Romans and a province of their empire, we do not read of any fort being erected on the rock of Calpe. It is doubtful if it was even the site of a town. No Roman antiquities have ever been found on the spot or in the neighbourhood.



[The Rock of Gibraltar.]

The place appears to have been first seized upon and converted into a military station by the Moors when they invaded Spain in the beginning of the eighth century. From their leader, Tarif, it was in consequence called Gibel-Tarif, or the Mountain of Tarif, of which Arabic name Gibraltar is a corruption. Soon after establishing themselves here, the Moors erected a lofty and extensive castle on the north-west side of the mountain, the ruins of which still remain. Gibraltar continued in the possession of the Moors for between seven and eight centuries, with the exception of about thirty years, during which it was held by the Christians, having been taken soon after the commencement of the fourteenth century by Ferdinand, king of Castile. It was recovered, however, in 1333, by Abomelek, the son of the emperor of Fez, and the Moors were not finally dispossessed of it till the middle of the following century. After that it remained a part of the kingdom of Spain, down nearly to our own times.

The promontory of Gibraltar forms the south-western extremity of the province of Andalusia, running out into the sea in nearly a due south direction for about three miles. The greater part of this tongue consists of a very lofty rock. It rises abruptly from the land to the height of fully 1300 feet, presenting a face almost perfectly perpendicular, and being consequently from that, its northern extremity, completely inaccessible. The west side, however, and the southern extremity, consist each of a series of precipices or declivities which admit of being ascended. The town, now containing a population of above 17,000 persons, is built on the west side. Along the summit of the mountain, from north to south, runs a bristling ridge of rocks, forming a ragged and undulating line against the sky when viewed from the east or west. The whole of the western breast of the promontory is nearly covered with fortifications. Anciently, it is said, it used to be well wooded in many places; but there are now very few trees to be seen,

although a good many gardens are scattered up and down both in the town and among the fortifications. A great part of the rock is hollowed out into caverns, some of which are of magnificent dimensions, especially one called St. George's Cave, at the southern point, which although having only an opening of five feet, expands into an apartment of two hundred feet in length by ninety in breadth, from the lofty roof of which descend numerous stalactitical pillars, giving it the appearance of a gothic cathedral. These caves seem to have been the chief thing for which Gibraltar was remarkable among the ancients. They are mentioned by the Roman geographer, Pomponius Mela, who wrote about the middle of the first century of our era. The southern termination of the rock of Gibraltar is called Europa Point, and has been sometimes spoken of as the termination in that direction of the European continent; but Tarifa Point, to the west of Gibraltar, is fully five miles farther south.

It is impossible for us here to attempt any description of the fortifications which now cover so great a part of this celebrated promontory. Gibraltar was first fortified in the modern style by the German engineer, Daniel Speckel, at the command of the emperor Charles V. towards the close of the sixteenth century. But little of what was then erected probably now remains. Since the place fell into the possession of the English, no expense has been spared to turn its natural advantages to the best account, and additions have repeatedly been made to the old fortifications on the most extensive scale. It is, now, without doubt, the most complete fortress in the world.

More than half a century ago Gibraltar was accounted by military men almost impregnable. "No power whatever," says Colonel James in his History of the Herculanean Straits, published in 1771, "can take that place, unless a plague, pestilence, famine, or the want of ordnance, musketry, and ammunition, or some unforeseen stroke of Providence, should happen." It is certainly now much stronger than it was then. One improvement which has especially added to its security is the formation of numerous covered galleries excavated in the rock, with embrasures for firing down upon both the isthmus and the bay. The interior of part of these works is represented in the annexed wood-cut.

Gibraltar was taken by an English fleet, under the

[Interior of the Rock of Gibraltar.]

command of Sir George Rooke and the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, in July, 1704. The project of the attack was very suddenly formed at a council of war held on board the admiral's ship, while the fleet was cruising in the Mediterranean, and it was apprehended that it would be obliged to return to England without having performed any exploit commensurate to the expectations with which it had been fitted out. The affair proved a very easy one; the garrison, which consisted of one hundred and fifty men, having surrendered after a bombardment of only a few hours. The assailants lost only sixty lives, the greater part by a mine which was sprung after they had effected a landing. In the latter part of the same year a most resolute effort was made to recover the place by the combined forces of France and Spain, which failed after it had been persevered in for several months, and had cost the besiegers not less than 10,000 men. The loss of the garrison was about 400.

At the Peace of Utrecht, in 1713, the possession of Gibraltar was confirmed to England. In 1727, however, another attempt, on a formidable scale, was made by Spain to dislodge the foreigners. An army of 20,000 men having encamped in the neighbourhood, the attack was commenced in February and continued till the 12th of May, when it was put an end to by the general peace. In this siege the garrison lost 300 in killed and wounded; but the loss of the besiegers was not less than 3000. The guns in the fortifications, it is worthy of remark, proved so bad, that seventy cannons and thirty mortars burst in the course of the firing.

But the most memorable of all the sieges of Gibraltar was the last, which commenced in 1779, and did not

terminate till it had been continued for more than three years. Of this remarkable siege an excellent and interesting account has been given by Captain John Drinkwater, who was present in the beleaguered fortress during the whole time. England was engaged in sustaining the contest with her revolted colonies in America, when hostilities were also commenced against her, first by France and some time after by Spain. There is no doubt that, whatever were her professions, the latter power took up arms merely with the object of recovering Gibraltar. The Spanish ambassador having announced the intentions of his Court, in London, on the 16th of June, 1779, on the 21st of the same month all communication between Gibraltar and the surrounding country was closed by command of the government of Madrid. It was the middle of the following month, however, before the Spaniards began to block up the fort. Fortunately, in the early part of this year, General George Augustus Eliot, who had been recently appointed Governor, had arrived in the fort, and brought to the crisis that was approaching the aid of his great military science and talents, as well as of some of the highest moral qualities that ever adorned the soldier or the man. General Eliot, who was the ninth and youngest son of Sir Gilbert Eliot of Stobbs, in Roxburghshire, was at this time about sixty years of age, more than forty of which he had spent in the service of his country. Another fortunate circumstance was that a supply of provisions had arrived in the preceding April. Had it not been for this, the garrison might have suffered terribly from the sudden stoppage of their accustomed intercourse both with Spain and with Africa.

The first firing which took place was on the 12th of September, when a cannonade was opened from the fort which destroyed the works that the besiegers had spent many of the preceding weeks in erecting. The blockade, notwithstanding, became every day closer; and the occasional boats, which had for some time stolen in from the African coast and other places, at length found it impossible to continue their attempts. By the end of October provisions had become extremely dear. About the same time, too, the small-pox broke out among the Jewish inhabitants of the town, and every precaution had to be used to prevent the spread of the disease. In November, the Governor, in order to try on how little food life and strength could be sustained, restricted himself for eight days to four ounces of rice per day. Thistles, dandelions, wild leeks, &c., began to be eaten by the people of the town—and meat sold from half-a-crown to four shillings the pound.

The first firing from the besiegers took place on the 12th of January, 1780; and the first person wounded in the fort was a woman. By the end of March the first supply of provisions arrived, brought in by the gallant Admiral Rodney, who had not only cut his way to the assistance of his distressed countryman through all the opposition of the enemy, but had captured six of their men-of-war, including a sixty-four gun-ship with the admiral on board, together with seventeen merchantmen. His present majesty, then known as Prince William Henry, was serving on board one of Sir George Rodney's ships as a midshipman, and often visited the garrison while the fleet remained in the bay. Captain Drinkwater relates that, on seeing a prince of the blood thus serving as a warrant-officer, the captive Spanish Admiral exclaimed that Great Britain well deserved the empire of the seas, when even her kings' sons were found thus holding the humblest situations on board her ships.

For a good many months after this, things continued in nearly the same state. The garrison and townspeople were again and again reduced to the greatest privations by scarcity of provisions before supplies arrived. In the spring of 1781, the besiegers at last opened their batteries, and continued firing upon the town till they had completely destroyed it. On the 27th of April, however, a most gallant exploit was performed by a party from the garrison, who, making a sortie from their fortifications, succeeded in setting fire to, and reducing to ashes, all the erections of the enemy, although distant not less than three-quarters of a mile. This, however, brought only a temporary relief. The firing soon after recommenced, and, for more than a year, continued almost incessantly. In the course of 1782 it was, on the suggestion of General Boyd, returned from the Rock with red-hot balls, a device which was found to produce the most powerful effect. The enemy, however, now prepared for a grand effort. On the 12th of September the combined fleets of France and Spain arrived in the bay. Next morning there were drawn up around the south and west sides of the promontory a most formidable armament, consisting of forty-seven sail of the line, seven of which were three-deckers, together with ten battering-ships, the strongest that had ever been built, and many frigates and smaller vessels. On land there lay an army of 40,000 men, with batteries on which were mounted 200 pieces of heavy ordnance. On the other side, the garrison now consisted of about 7,000 effective men. The ships were permitted to take their stations without molestation; but, about a quarter before ten o'clock, as soon as the first of them dropped anchor, the citadel began to pour upon them its hitherto-reserved artillery. Now commenced a scene of terrible sublimity. Four hundred pieces of the heaviest ordnance thundered without intermission, and filled the air with smoke and flame. "For some hours," says Captain Drinkwater, "the attack and defence were so equally well supported as scarcely to admit any appearance of superiority in the cannonade on either side. The wonderful construction of the ships seemed to bid defiance to the powers of the heaviest ordnance. In the afternoon, however, the face of things began to change considerably. The smoke which had been observed to issue from the upper part of the flag-ship appeared to prevail, notwithstanding the constant application of water; and the admiral's second was perceived to be in the same condition. Confusion was now apparent on board several of the vessels; and, by the evening, their cannonade was considerably abated. About seven or eight o'clock it almost entirely ceased, excepting from one or two ships to the northward, which, from their distance, had suffered little injury."

In the end, the attack ended in the complete annihilation of the assailing squadron. All the larger ships were beaten to pieces or burnt. As night approached groans and signals of distress from those on board the shattered navy supplied the place of the now slackened fire. Many of the wretched men were struggling for life in the waters; and the victors themselves at last put out to their assistance, and picked numbers of them up. The loss of the enemy was supposed to amount to about 2000, including prisoners. Of the English there were only 16 killed and 68 wounded. The Rock was a much better defence than even those strong-built men-of-war. The assailants had had 300 pieces of ordnance in play; the garrison only employed 80 cannon, 7 mortars, and 9 howitzers. "Upwards of 8300 rounds," says Captain Drinkwater, "more than half of which were hot shot, and 716 barrels of powder, were expended by our artillery."

Even this complete discomfiture, however, did not subdue the obstinacy of the besiegers. They continued to encompass the place, and even to keep up a feeble fire upon it some months longer. At length the long blockade was terminated by the announcement of the signature of the preliminaries of a general peace on the

2d of February, 1783. The men in the Spanish boat that came with the tidings of this event made their appearance with ecstasy in their countenances, and exclaiming, "We are all friends!" It was not till the 10th of March, however, that free intercourse was re-established by the arrival from England of the official intelligence that peace had been concluded. General Eliot and his brave companions soon after returned home to receive the congratulations of their country; and since this hard contest no foreign power has dared to assault Gibraltar.

THE LOCUST.

The locust belongs to that class of insects which naturalists distinguish by the name of *gryllus*. The common grasshopper is of this genus, and in its general appearance resembles the "migratory locust," of which we have to speak. The body of this insect is long in proportion to its size, and is defended on the back by a strong corslet, either of a greenish or light-brown hue. The head, which is vertical, is very large, and furnished with two antennæ of about an inch in length: the eyes are very prominent, dark and rolling: the jaws are strong, and terminate in three incisive teeth, the sharp points of which traverse each other like scissors. The insect is furnished with four wings, of which the exterior pair, which are properly cases to the true wings, are tough, straight, and larger than those which they cover, which are pliant, reticulated, nearly transparent, and fold up in the manner of a fan. The four anterior legs are of middling size, and of great use in climbing and feeding; but the posterior pair are much larger and longer, and of such strength that the locust is enabled by their means to leap more than two hundred times the length of its own body, which is usually from two to three inches. Locusts, as the writer of this article has seen them in the East, are generally of a light brown or stone colour, with dusky spots on the corslet and wing-cases; the mouth and inside of the thighs tinctured with blue, and the wings with green, blue, or red. These wings are of a delicate and beautiful texture; and in the fine fibres, by which the transparency is traversed, the Moslems of western Asia fancy that they can decypher an Arabic sentence, which signifies "We are the destroying army of God."

The female locust lays about forty eggs, which in appearance are not unlike oat-grains, but smaller. She covers them with a viscid matter by which they are sometimes attached to blades of grass, but are more usually deposited in the ground. For this purpose she prefers light sandy earths, and will not leave the eggs in compact, moist, or cultivated grounds, unless she has been brought down on them by rain, wind, or fatigue, and rendered incapable of seeking a more eligible situation. Having performed this, the female dies; and the eggs remain in the ground throughout the winter. If much rain occurs, the wet spoils them, by destroying the viscid matter in which they are enveloped, and which is essential to their preservation. Heat also seems necessary to their production, for the little worm, which proceeds from the egg, sometimes appears so early as February and sometimes not until May, according to the state of the season. This, in the usual course, becomes a nymph, in which state it attains its full growth in about twenty-four days. After having for a few days abstained from food, it then bursts its skin, comes forth a perfect animal, and immediately begins to unfold and trim its wings with the hinder feet. The insects which first attain this state do not immediately fly off, but wait in the neighbourhood for those whose development is more tardy; but when their army is formed, they take their flight from the district.

To those who have not seen a flight of locusts, it is difficult by description to convey an idea of the appearance it presents. As seen approaching in the distance, it resembles a vast opaque cloud, and as it advances a clattering noise is heard which is occasioned by the agitation and concussion of wings in their close phalanxes. When they arrive they fill the air, like flakes of thick falling snow; and we have known the bright and clear sky of Chaldea become darker than that of London on some heavy November day.

Wherever they alight every vegetable substance disappears with inconceivable rapidity before them. The most beautiful and highly-cultivated lands assume the appearance of a desert, and the trees stand stripped of all their leaves, as in the midst of winter. After devouring the fruits, the herbage, and the leaves of trees, they attack the buds and the bark, and do not even spare the thatch of the houses. The most poisonous, caustic, or bitter plants, as well as the juicy and nutritive, are equally consumed; and thus "the land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness." It seems as if nothing could appease their devouring hunger, and the energy and activity they exhibit, and the rapidity of their operations, almost exceed belief. Their depredations are not confined to the open air;—they scale the walls, and penetrate to the granaries and houses. They swarm from the cellar to the garret, and, within doors and without, they are a terrible nuisance, for they are continually springing about, and often, in consequence, give a person startling raps on different parts of the face, affording very sensible evidence of the force with which they leap; and, as the mouth cannot be opened without the danger of receiving a locust, it is impossible to converse or eat with comfort. When they have settled themselves at night, the ground is covered with them to a vast extent; and, in some situations, they lie one above another several inches thick. In travelling they are crushed beneath the feet of the horses; and the animals are so terribly annoyed by the bouncing against them in all directions of the insects they have disturbed, that they snort with alarm, and become unwilling to proceed.

It is not merely the living presence of these insects which is terrible, but new calamities are occasioned by their death, when the decomposition of their bodies fills the air with pestilential miasma, occasioning epidemic maladies, the ravages of which are compared to those of the plague. Thus famine and death follow in their train; and instances are not of rare occurrence in the East in which villages and whole districts have been depopulated by them.

Under these circumstances it necessarily becomes an object of anxious attention, in the countries they are most accustomed to visit, either to prevent them from alighting on the cultivated grounds, or to drive them off or destroy them after they have descended.

The impression is very general that noise frightens these insect devastators and prevents them from alighting. When, therefore, the people are aware of the approach of their armies, every kettle or other noisy instrument in the place is in requisition, with which, and by shouts and screeches, men, women, and children unite in the endeavour to make the most horrible din in their power. The scene would be truly laughable, from the earnestness which every one exhibits in this strange employment, were not all disposition to mirth checked by the consciousness of the fearful consequences of the invasion which it is thus endeavoured to avert.

How far noise may really operate in preventing their descent in ordinary circumstances, it is not easy to ascertain; but on the approach of evening, or when exhausted by their journey, nothing can prevent them from alighting. They will then descend even on the seas and rivers, of which some striking instances are recorded.

When a swarm has actually alighted, the means employed to drive them off are much the same as those to prevent their descent. But this is never attempted in wet weather, or until the sun has absorbed the dew, as the locust is quite incapable of flying while its wings are wet. When the swarm is large, or when it has come down on cultivated grounds, no measure of destruction is practicable without sacrificing the produce; but when the depredators have been driven to waste grounds, or happened in the first instance to descend upon them, various modes of extirpation are resorted to, of which the following is the most effective:—a large trench is dug from three to four feet wide, and about the same depth. The off side is lined with people furnished with sticks and brooms, while others form a semicircle which encloses the extremities of the trench, and the troop of locusts, which are then driven into the grave intended for them by the clamorous noises we have already described. The party stationed on the other side push back such insects as attempt to escape at the edges, crush them with their sticks and brooms, and throw in the earth upon them.

These insect devastators have fortunately a great number of enemies. Birds, lizards, hogs, foxes, and even frogs, devour a great number; and a high wind, a cold rain, or a tempest destroys millions of them. In the East they are used as an article of food. In some parts they are dried and pounded, and a sort of bread is made which is of much utility in bad harvests. They are sold as common eatables in the bazaar of Bagdad, and the cooks of the East have various ways of preparing them for use.

CHARACTER OF FRANKLIN.

(*From the 'Gallery of Portraits,' No. XX.*)

FEW men ever possessed such opportunities or talents for contributing to the welfare of mankind; fewer still have used them to better purpose: and it is pleasant to know, on his own authority, that such extensive services were rendered without any sacrifice of his own happiness. In his later correspondence he frequently alludes with complacency to a favourite sentiment which he has also introduced into his 'Memoirs;'—"That he would willingly live over again the same course of life, even though not allowed the privilege of an author, to correct in a second edition the faults of the first."

His remarkable success in life and in the discharge of his public functions is not to be ascribed to genius, unless the term be extended to that perfection of common sense and intimate knowledge of mankind which almost entitled his sagacity to the name of prescience, and made "Franklin's forebodings" proverbially ominous among those who knew him. His pre-eminence appears to have resulted from the habitual cultivation of a mind originally shrewd and observant, and gifted with singular powers of energy and self-control. There was a business-like alacrity about him, with a discretion and integrity which conciliated the respect even of his warmest political foes; a manly straight-forwardness before which no pretension could stand unrebuked; and a cool tenacity of temper and purpose which never forsook him under the most discouraging circumstances, and was no doubt exceedingly provoking to his opponents. Indeed his sturdiness, however useful to his country in time of need, was perhaps carried rather to excess; his enemies called it obstinacy, and accused him of being morose and sullen. No better refutation of such a charge can be wished for than the testimony borne to his disposition by Priestley ('Monthly Magazine,' 1782), a man whom Franklin was justly proud to call his friend. In private life he was most estimable; two of his most favourite maxims were, never to exalt himself by lowering others, and in society to enjoy and contribute to all innocent amusements without reserve. His friendships were consequently lasting, and chosen at will from among the most amiable as well as the most distinguished of both sexes, wherever his residence happened to be fixed.

His chief claims to philosophical distinction are his experiments and discoveries in electricity; but he has left essays upon various other matters of interest and practical utility—an end of which he never lost sight. Among these are remarks on ship-building and light-houses; on the temperature of the sea at different latitudes and depths, and the phenomena of what is called the Gulf-stream of the Atlantic; on the effect of oil poured upon rough water, and other subjects connected with practical navigation; and on the proper construction of lamps, chimneys, and stoves. His suggestions on these subjects are very valuable. His other writings are numerous; they relate chiefly to politics, or the inculcation of the rules of prudence and morality. Many of them are light and even playful; they are all instructive, and written in an excellent and simple style; but they are not entirely free from the imputation of trifling upon serious subjects. The most valuable of them is probably his autobiography, which is unfortunately but a fragment.

As a speaker he was neither copious nor eloquent; there was even a degree of hesitation and embarrassment in his delivery. Yet as he seldom rose without having something important to say, and always spoke to the purpose, he commanded the attention of his hearers, and generally succeeded in his object.

His religious principles, when disengaged from the scepticism of his youth, appear to have been sincere, and unusually free from sectarian animosity.

Upon the whole, his long and useful life forms an instructive example of the force which arises from the harmonious combination of strong faculties and feelings when so controlled by sense and principle that no one is suffered to predominate to the disparagement of the rest.

[Franklin.]

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